



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Ocean Service  
Office of Response and Restoration  
Coastal Protection and Restoration Division

## **NOAA CPRD Program Waste Site Fact Sheet**

**Site Name:** Rhone-Poulenc 1990 Bay Road Site

**Site Location:** East Palo Alto, CA

**Congressional District:** CA-14      **EPA Region:** 9

**Site Description:** The site was used from 1926 until 1971 for the production of herbicides and sodium arsenite compounds in underground tanks. Wastes from the arsenite process were disposed of in sludge ponds on the property. Numerous releases to the air, soil, and surface water and several flooding incidents have resulted in offsite migration of arsenic and other metals. High arsenic levels in groundwater and soils has caused concern among nearby residents, while arsenic in the tidal wetland adjacent to the property may pose a risk to fish, invertebrates, birds, and mammals including the endangered salt marsh harvest mouse. The site has been hailed by both the State and the responsible party as an example of how cooperation among all concerned parties can lead to a protective remedy with a minimum of legal costs or delays.

**NOAA Activities to Date:** The State of California's Regional Water Quality Control Board (the Board) is the lead agency for cleanup. The Board requested NOAA's assistance in characterizing the ecological risk to the wetland. NOAA has worked with the Board, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the responsible party to identify resources of concern, develop sampling plans, choose appropriate reference sites, and design a solid and defensible ecological risk assessment plan.

**Restoration Status:** Work to stabilize and remove the worst of the contamination has already taken place. The underground tanks have been pulled, the sludge ponds dug up and filled, and the remaining soils capped. Contamination in the nearby residential neighborhood is currently being addressed. By this summer, plans for the final ecological risk assessment for the tidal wetland will be completed.

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Last Update: May, 2001